

## A NEW *ASCLEPIAS* FROM ZACATECAS, MEXICO

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What seems to be a very distinctive but as yet undescribed species of *Asclepias* was discovered in July 1975 by Mr. Salvador Correa of Western Michigan University, near the dry forested summits of the great ridge between the Río Juchipila and the Río Bolaños, in southern Zacatecas. Unfortunately Mr. Correa's specimen was without fruit, but the flowers are so remarkable there seems to be no doubt the plant is unique.

*Asclepias zacatecana* McVaugh, sp. nov.

Fig. 1.

Herba puberula debilis 30 cm alta ut videtur perennis, foliis linearibus oppositis 6–12 cm longis, 3–5 mm latis, attenuatis, umbellis axillaribus paucifloris quam foliis triplo brevioribus; flores 3–7, pedicellis tenuibus 1–2 cm longis instructi, atropurpurei sed cucullis apicem versus pallidis subhyalinis; calycis lacinae ellipticae 2–2.5 mm longae; corolla 7–8 mm longa, sub anthesi rotato-reflexa, lobis ovatis acutis; gynostegium stipitatum, columna late cylindrica 1–1.3 mm longa, 1.5 mm lata, cucullis erectis 5–6 mm longis, delicatulis, lateraliter compressis sessilibus base saccatis, eis marginibus valde in dentibus erectis prolongatis, cornu valde adnato dentato cucullo longiore; androecium conicum, ca. 1.5 mm longum latumque; folliculi mihi ignoti.

Leaves essentially glabrous, attenuate at both ends, 1-nerved; umbels in the upper axils, the peduncles puberulent, 2–3 cm long; pedicels puberulent adaxially; calyx, corolla, and the bases of the hoods apparently dark purple, the distal parts of the hoods including the horns nearly white or colorless, very thin and delicate; hoods apparently fleshy and firm at base, rounded on the backs, open adaxially, somewhat contracted on the sides above the basal attachment, truncate at apex but obscurely toothed abaxially between the two prolonged marginal teeth; horn usually with two short abaxially directed teeth above middle; anther-head with conspicuous hyaline apical appendages, and with the wings dilated toward base and bearing each an apical notch.

ZACATECAS: Near summits between Jalpa and Tlaltenango, steep mountainsides in deep soil, oak forest with *Pinus lumholtzii*, *Arbutus* spp., *Prunus serotina*, elev. ca 2400–2500 m, 22 July 1975, Correa 25 (MICH, type). Known only from this collection.

In Nueva Galicia there are several species of *Asclepias* that are herbs with opposite and essentially linear leaves. None of these shares with *A. zacatecana* the characters of dark, rotate-reflexed corolla, short but definite column, and long and characteristically toothed hoods. Superficially somewhat similar is *A. gentryi* Standl., in which the flowers are red and yellow, the hoods only 3–4 mm long and obtuse, and the translator-arms broadly triangular, larger than the gland.

It is noteworthy that in at least one flower of the type of *A. zacatecana*, the number of pollinium sacs was usually 3 in each unit. The central one was located in the flower between the wings of adjacent anthers; it seemed normal but slightly smaller than the two lateral ones.



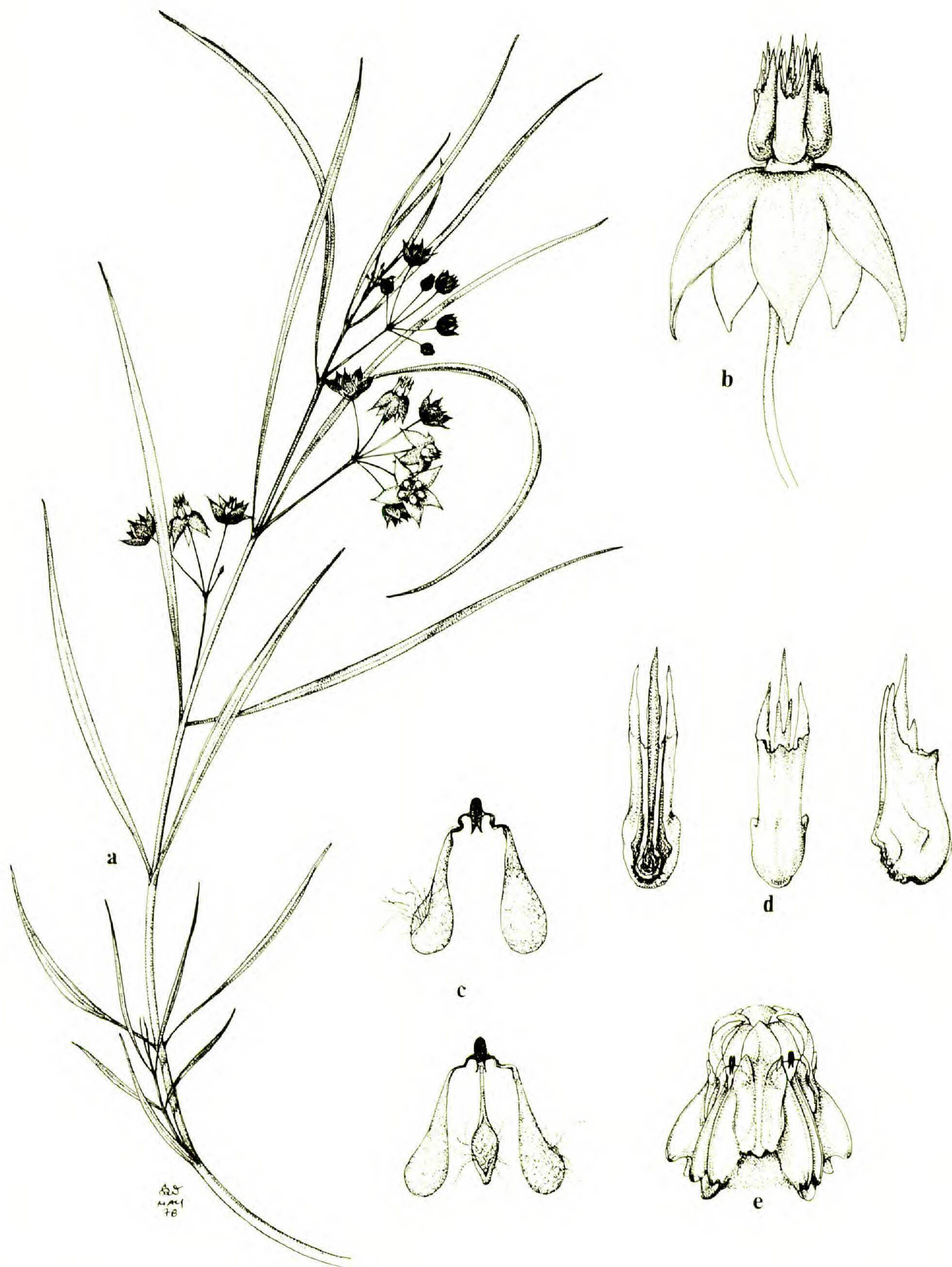


FIG. 1. *Asclepias zacatecana*, drawn from the type by Karin Douthit. a, flowering branch  $\times 0.5$ ; b, flower  $\times 2.5$ ; c, germinating pollinia  $\times 15$ ; d, adaxial, abaxial, and lateral views of hood  $\times 5$ ; e, anther-head  $\times 10$ .